

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

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CHP HONORS FALLEN OFFICER CHRIS LYDON

WEST SACRAMENTO – A 21-gun salute today capped the California Highway Patrol's (CHP) annual Peace Officer Memorial observance. The CHP honored the 189 officers killed in the line of duty since its formation nearly 70 years ago.

Special recognition was given to Officer Christopher Lydon of the CHP's El Cajon Area Office, who died June 5, 1998 while driving to intercept a drunk driving suspect.

Maria Contreras-Sweet, Secretary of the Business Transportation and Housing Agency, was the featured speaker at the ceremony, held at the CHP Academy in West Sacramento. A crowd of officers, families of fallen officers, active and retired employees and special guests attended the event.

Lydon, a two-year veteran of the CHP, was on his way to intercept a possible drunk driver reported to 9-1-1 by a cellular caller. His patrol car lost traction on a curve and spun out of control, overturning and striking a tree. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

"The work of a highway patrol officer inevitably involves dangerous moments, and danger sometimes will erupt into tragedy," said Contreras-Sweet.

"We take enormous pride in our highway patrol, and that's because you take great pride in yourselves and your work. Thank you for being our highway guardians," said Contreras Sweet.

Commissioner D. O. "Spike" Helmick lead Lydon's family members and Contreras-Sweet in placing a wreath at the Academy's Memorial Fountain, which bears plaques engraved with the names of each fallen officer.

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